1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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planted at the break of the rains, and of the new crop, rice, is a seed-bed of ash prepared, and then it is grass and scrub which is burned; they do not fell or pollard trees to provide ash. For other crops there is no burning; the weeds are hoed in green instead; and, at a second hoeing before planting, the earth is piled into ridges or mounds to ensure drainage. Formerly, it is said, the chiefs insisted that the ridges on slopes should be made contour-wise, and recently this law has been revived. Elton, the first European to travel through the area, observed that there was 'terraced cultivation everywhere';[1] and the ridges do in fact look like terracing from a distance.

Hoeing is the work of men and boys; only quite recently have a few women, whose husbands are away in European employment, begun to hoe for themselves. And most men hoe for three or four hours a day during the greater part of the year, for crops are planted in succession. Neither old age nor high status excuses a man from this duty. Even the chief Mwaipopo, who was already grown up when the Europeans arrived in his country, hoed regularly in his fields during the years 1935–8. Iron hoes were made by Nyakyusa smiths from iron obtained from the Kinga,[2] but they were scarce, and some men had to use wooden hoes such as many of the women still have for weeding (*vide* Plate VII). The women are solely responsible for sowing, weeding, and reaping.

Cattle are fairly numerous:[3] few men over twenty-five nowadays own none, and many older men have four or five cows in their stalls. Long ago, we were told, cattle were scarcer, some men having to marry without them, but Cotterill (1876)[4] and Kerr-Cross (1890)[5] both said 'cattle abound' in Nyakyusa coun-

on 'Wanyakyusa Agriculture' (*The East African Agricultural Journal*, April 1944), states that 'though the soil is not being eroded to any great extent it is still being impoverished'.

[1] Elton, op. cit., pp. 326, 330.

[2] Thomson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 272–3. Possibly iron was also obtained from the west. Kerr Cross (op. cit. p. 289) saw large foundries in Nyika country before 1890. cf. Elton, op. cit., p. 321 and map at the end.

[3] No census of the cattle in the district had been taken when we were among the Nyakyusa. D. H. Thwaites, op. cit., states that, 'The number of cattle in the district (Rungwe) in the 1941 census was about 2.3 head per taxpayer or 55 head per square mile'.

[4] H. B. Cotterill, 'On the Nyasa and a Journey from the North End to Zanzibar', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XXII (1878).

[5] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyassa', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 119.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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f. Housekeeping

Every married woman has her own hearth and granary, and she works very largely alone when cooking and cleaning; but in one essential activity women who are neighbours in a village regularly co-operate, and that is in fetching firewood. We never saw a woman going alone; usually there is a group of three or four up to a dozen or more. Firewood must be fetched two or three times a week, and the journey and the collection of the wood takes from four to ten hours, depending upon the distance of the village from a patch of forest or bush. Thus the women spend up to thirty hours a week fetching wood, and it is with village neighbours that this time is spent, not with relatives from other villages. If a woman is ill her friends will help in bringing wood and cooked food for her. Some co-wives co-operate in this way, fetching wood together, and helping each other in sickness, but whether they do or not depends upon personal friendship. Often it is with an unrelated neighbour, rather than with a co-wife, that a woman works most closely. Only when co-wives are sisters, or aunt and niece, are they expected to work together regularly.

Village neighbours—women—also co-operate in the preparation of feasts, as we shall see in the following chapter.

g. Economic co-operation beyond the village

The economic relations of fellow villagers, and the changes taking place in these relations, cannot be understood without some reference to economic co-operation beyond the village boundaries. As we have already indicated, co-operation with relatives living in other villages is very important: cattle, the most prized possession of the Nyakyusa, circulate within kinship groups, between father and son, brother and brother, and between affines, and these same relatives assist one another in cultivation and building. But beyond the circle of kinsmen and village-mates there was formerly little economic co-operation. Each village and kinship group was largely self-sufficient, buying from outside little save iron spears and hoes, medicines, salt, cosmetics, and brass or copper wire for ornament.

Smiths were essential to the Nyakyusa economy for they

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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fashioned iron hoes for cultivation and spears for hunting and war; they also made the cow-bells with which rich men loved to decorate their cattle. Doctors were equally important, for the medicines supplied by them were believed to influence health, fertility, and success in every undertaking. Neither smiths nor doctors served only their own home villages—the number of smiths was much smaller than the number of villages—and doctors living at a distance were generally preferred to those living near by. The need for iron goods and for medicines therefore took men out of their own villages and made links with other villages, often in other chiefdoms. Some at least of the iron ore which the smiths smelted was obtained from the distant Kinga mountains outside the Nyakyusa area all together (*vide supra*, p. 7), and many medicines came from the Kinga or Sangu. *Umwafi* for the poison ordeal was bought from Ngonde. Three other commodities also came from far—these were salt, which Kinga bought from Bena country and sold to the Nyakyusa; a red root (*ikipimba*) used as a dye and cosmetic, bought by the Mahasi from the Sangu and sold to the Nyakyusa; and brass or copper wire for making body rings (*amanyeta*).[1] There was scarcely any cloth in the country when the Europeans first arrived.[2] Pots were sold throughout the Lake-shore plain by the Kisi—Thomson found the Kisi pot-market operating in 1879[3]—and in the hills by Penja specialists. The details of this trade will be discussed when we come to consider the wider relations of the Nyakyusa: here we are only concerned to show that though villagers were dependent on outsiders for a little iron and salt, together with some medicines and ornaments, the bulk of the trade remained very small—salt and iron were extremely scarce—and economic relations beyond the village and kinship group were tenuous.

[1] We do not know by what route the wire came in: it is possible that it was as scarce as cloth before the first contact with Europeans. Elton speaks of spear shafts 'beautifully inlaid with a delicate tracery of brass and copper wire' (op. cit., p. 323), but the first reference we have traced to *amanyeta* in Nyakyusa country is in D. Kerr-Cross 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 118, his observation having been made in 1893. At that time he says 'you could buy anything for brass wire'. c.f. Moir, op. cit., p. 89. Fotheringham (op. cit., p. 27) says that the brass wire used in Ngonde (before 1889) was imported from Britain.

[2] Elton, op. cit., pp. 316, 320, 322, 331; Thomson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 268, 274.

[3] Thomson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 263. The market was at Pupanganda, at the N.E. corner of the Lake, on the narrow strip of land between the escarpment of the Livingstones and the water.

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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ing audiences watch their friends in the detachment of the King's African Rifles at bayonet drill in Masoko.[1]

Display is felt to be particularly appropriate to young people, and bachelors were held to be the fiercest warriors, but neither dancing nor fighting was confined to young men. The chief Mwaipopo (Plate V) was famous as a skilful and ardent dancer when over seventy, and the leader in war was the senior headman of the country, who, if not already married when he took office, had to marry almost immediately, since his wife shared in the ritual of establishing his house. Furthermore the villages of married men of the ruling generation fought, as well as the villages of their bachelor brothers and sons.

That the Nyakyusa had some skill in warfare is certain, for they defeated and drove off Ngoni raiders and warriors of the Sangu chief Merere,[2] but they never developed a military kingdom like that of the Bemba to the west, or the Hehe to the east, nor did they raid at large like the Masai and Ngoni. Their geographical position sheltered them very considerably from outside attack, and discouraged raiding abroad. They confined themselves mostly to lifting the cattle of neighbouring chiefdoms.

Cattle, whether they be spoils of war or inherited wealth, are displayed. Not only does a long byre add to the dignity of a homestead, but, when there is some ceremony at the home of a rich man, he shows off his herd by driving it round and round the homestead. At other times his sons gallop it along the village street, the iron bells with which the animals are adorned ringing merrily. Nyakyusa smiths make cow-bells in sets,[3] to chime in harmony, and the aim of a rich man is to own a set of bells which ring a full chime, and a herd large enough to carry them. Nowadays those who own bicycles display them in the same sort of way, riding round and round the homestead at a ceremony, and ringing the bells madly.

Unlike the enjoyment of good company (*ukwangala*), display

[1] This detachment was not supposed to include Nyakyusa who were recruited for a detachment stationed outside the district, but in fact Nyakyusa got in by posing as men from Ngonde, Nyasaland.

[2] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyasa', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 119–20; Lugard, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 56, speaks of the Nyakyusa as 'brave in war'.

[3] We deposited a set in the Livingstone Memorial Museum, Livingstone, N. Rhodesia.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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nant woman there is a notion that they will *flee* from him, and therefore he will be hopelessly unsuccessful in hunting. Isaiah, who persisted in hunting while his wife was pregnant and rarely brought in anything, was the laughing-stock of his neighbours. Lyandileko, the woman doctor, explained: 'The animals flee because the man smells. He smells because his wife is pregnant.'

Procreation and smithing are also felt to be in opposition because they are felt to be alike. A pregnant woman usually avoids a forge altogether, lest she miscarry, and her husband, if he approaches one, remains silent until he has picked up a piece of charcoal, spat on it, and thrown it into the fire. If he neglects to do so, the iron does not coalesce. Kasitile explained the taboo very clearly:

> If a woman is pregnant she and her husband both fear to go near a forge lest either the iron or the foetus is spoiled. The foetus is spoiled only because medicines are used on the forge; that is to say, the medicine of the forge spoils the iron in the belly of a woman, and she has a miscarriage. But if there is no medicine then the iron is spoiled; it is difficult to work until the smith has sought a doctor to treat it with medicine; then the iron is all right again.

Kasitile speaks of 'the iron in the belly of the woman' and the details of this symbolism are instructive. Angombwike said:

> When a smith forges a spear he does not sleep with his wives[1] because, we say, when a woman conceives the fire blazes within her to forge a person, and the woman's fire and the smith's fire fight. When a smith comes with the fire of his smithy on his body and lies with a woman, the woman has a miscarriage.
>
> The iron of a woman is that within which receives the seed [i.e. the womb]. And we ordinary people who are not smiths, we fear the smith's fire. We do not fear to injure a woman, no, but we fear *ilipondelo*, the disease of the forge, in children. If a man sits talking with a smith at his forge and catches hold of the iron being forged there, if his wife at home bears a child, the child will cough: 'He, he.' It's like the cough of *ingotolo*, but we call it 'the forge'. Then people say: 'The forge! Indeed, you, the father, must have sat with a smith at the forge.' Then the father thinks, and he remembers, and takes the child to that smith with whom he sat, and the smith lets his bellows play on the child's body

[1] All informants were agreed that a forge is dangerous to a pregnant woman or her husband, but a smith consulted denied that he observed any sex taboos himself. 'The fire is mine.' 'But,' he said, 'if my wife is pregnant or has given birth to twins, when I go to someone else's forge I myself, with the wisdom of a smith, spit on a piece of charcoal and throw it in the fire.'

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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and that cures him. So, when a man comes to a smith's forge for the first time, he always takes a piece of charcoal from the fire and spits on it and throws it into the fire. This means: 'I have come to your forge, smith, may this fire not come on my body.'

And sometimes the smith's iron does not glow and sparkle well. Then he is angry, saying: 'Heavy ones are present. Some of you have pregnant wives, you are spoiling my fire.' We all pick up pieces of charcoal and spit on them and throw them into the fire again. Then the fire blazes up well and the iron glows and sparks.

Mwambuputa, the village headman, confirmed this:

When my wife is pregnant I fear the smithy. I spit on a piece of charcoal. Until she gives birth I fear, but when we just play together on the mat, and she has not yet conceived, I do not fear. . . . Only when it is seen that the 'iron' is there do I fear.

QUESTION: The iron?

MWAMBUPUTA: It's the blood of the man. The man is the smith. He forges iron there with the woman. The woman is the bellows. The smithing flourishes because of the sweat. Sometimes a woman conceives if I have lain with her two or three times—if Kyala gives us a child—but some delay, and I sleep with them a whole month.

QUESTION: The woman is a bellows?

MWAMBUPUTA: Yes, because when she is having intercourse she gasps: 'He, he, he!'

QUESTION: And the man?

MWAMBUPUTA: Yes, but where do we find the fire? In the body of the woman! It's a great fire. Hence we say the bellows is the woman. It's smithing. Women are the anvil. Is there not fire in their bodies? Therefore I hammer there.

The primary taboo is on the pregnant woman approaching the smithy lest she injure it, but it is also thought that, like grain and cattle, it may be treated with strong medicines which will cause her to miscarry if she breaks the taboo. Hence the Nyakyusa dictum: 'She who has a miscarriage is she who is proud (*namatingo*).'

The conception that like things are antagonistic, and that the sexual activities of different couples must not be mixed, is clearly shown in the taboos relating to fire and the calabash cup used for water. An elderly councillor of Ngonde, himself a Christian, explained it:

It is taboo for married people to blow up the fire in someone else's house, or to drink from the calabash cup; if they do they will bring a

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

about these arts and crafts is their failure to develop at all. Hints and suggestions were there continually; yet nothing ever came of them. Iron was digged, smelted, and made into tools, yet no better tool for digging the ironstone itself was thought of than the hoe. Cloth was widely made on native looms before the advent of inferior trade goods, and needles, with eyes, for sewing mats; but the idea of sewn garments did not penetrate the native mind. Burned clay pipes were made to direct the wind from the skin bellows into the blacksmith's fire, but no one received from these pipes a hint of other possibilities. The idea of the wheel, with its boundless possibilities, did not suggest itself to the Konde mind, nor, so far as I know, to the Bantu mind anywhere, although hints of it were lying about, especially in the round tree trunks which were used as rollers when a canoe had to be dragged some distance from the forest to the water.

At every point the native mind seems to have been waiting for the stimulus which was to come with the white man, and which has led to an awakening, the full extent of which is not realized except by thoughtful persons. For already, after the comparatively brief tuitional period of fifty years, Central Africans are replacing Indians as Government clerks, as hospital assistants, as engineers on river steamers, as telegraphists; they do all kinds of printing and bookbinding, carpentry, and building; and they fill positions of trust which a generation ago no one thought they would ever be capable of filling. The Konde have not yet taken more than a small share in

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

177 all this progress; but they have made a beginning, and they will go on.

• 326 522 Among the purely native arts that of the blacksmith is held in highest esteem; and the blacksmith himself is a man feared as well as honoured; and joked about as much as he is feared. I think if there were a local "Punch" here, jokes about the blacksmith would take the place of jokes about the plumber which in times past found so frequent favour with the editors of the actual "Punch." He steals both your time and your materials. He tells you that your hoe will be ready on a given day; you get your hoe days afterwards, and he has not used more than half the material you gave him; the rest will go to make another hoe, which he will sell, perhaps to yourself. "As great a thief as a blacksmith," "as big a liar as a blacksmith," are gross insults, not to the blacksmith, but to the man who is compared with him. "The blacksmith gets rich out of other men's property," is another saying indicating the morals of the great 326 artificer. Yet he is feared also, and such jokes are never made in his presence, for he is in touch with mysterious powers, and his ancestor blacksmiths have their own ways of conveying information to him. Quite recently a native friend of mine was talking to his chief, when a messenger came in hot haste to say that a hoe had broken in the blacksmith's hands. The blacksmith had gone at once to consult a diviner, and learned that the spirits were angry because no one was worshipping. "Go at once, therefore, and tell Mwaikuyu (the chief). Do you think heaven is

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

empty?" Mwaikuyu said, "Why should we die? I will call the people to worship."

The most important products of the smithy are hoes and spears. Of the latter there are about a dozen different kinds, for war, hunting, fishing; with broad or narrow blades; plain or with one, two, or three prongs; with long or short hafts. Axes are made for cutting down trees, digging out canoes, and all heavy work; some are slightly bent, and are used adze-wise; a small one, very sharp, is used for smoothing woodwork and finishing it off. There is also the *isengo*, a kind of cross between a hooked axe and a small scythe, used mostly for clearing bush land; and a long-bladed axe, carried by chiefs over the shoulder, and serving only as an ornament.

Knives are made of many patterns and sizes, with or without sheaths. A long spear-bladed knife is used for grass cutting, and a neat small strip of iron, sharpened at one end, not along the blade, is used as a razor. Arrows are not much used, as the Konde are not given to the use of the bow except for killing birds. Fish hooks were originally barbless, but some are now made on the European pattern. Needles are made for sewing mats; smaller ones for sewing breaks in calabashes, and others for sewing basketwork. Cow bells, tiny bells worn by little children on the ankles, anklets, and bracelets for women, complete the list.

For lake-shore people, and those living near the larger rivers, the most important wood-working art is canoe making, and the average Konde canoe is a

4: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FN17 Ngonde FN17

231 according to the *Bell Report*. Cattle and hides are exported to Tanganyika.[1] The *Nyamwanga* herds were reduced, partly by Bemba raids, and partly by rinderpest.[2]

Domestic Architecture

341 *Nganda* homesteads are famous in Nyasaland for their peculiar style and neatness
361 of execution. They are made of bamboos, specially grown for the purpose. They are oblong, with the ends slightly tapering upwards so that they present a ship-like appearance. The huts are erected in two lines facing each other, at a distance of about 30 yards. This centre street is kept scrupulously clean.[3] The *Nyakusa* live in round or long huts of bamboo or grass.[4] *Kinga* homesteads are scattered; they live in round huts of bamboo and straw.[5] The *Ina* formerly lived in large stockaded villages, but these are now broken up.[6]

Specialization and Trade

●326 The Ngonde were accomplished iron-workers; iron was dug, smelted, and made into hoes and spears.[7] The Iwa were formerly noted as iron-workers. Both they and the Nyamwanga grow tobacco on a large scale.[8]

286 A rough kind of cloth was made on native looms. The Ngonde made hollowed
501 canoes, but were not good sailors. In fishing they used poison, hooks, nets, and traps.
226 Pottery and basket-making were carried on.[9]

[177] The Ngonde were the most civilized of this cluster of tribes, owing to their closer
439 contact with Arab and Swahili traders who used the lake as a waterway.[10] The Nyam-
643 wanga also had opportunities of contact with Arab and Swahili traders at the south end of Lake Tanganyika,[11] but information about the effect of this on their economic life is lacking. By comparison with the Ngonde the Nyakyusa were isolated from contact with the outside world,[12] and this is probably true of the other tribes of the group. Among the Ngonde, in spite of the political hierarchy and central religious authority of Kyungu, economic links between separate local groups were few. The ivory trade was a source of wealth for the Kyungu and for the nobles of Ngonde at Mbande, but its benefits had a strictly limited effect on the rest of the people. The economic links between the capital and the chiefdoms followed the lines of the political system. The income of Kyungu in slaves and cattle depended on the judicial process and on warfare. He had a semi-monopoly of the ivory of the country (the right tusk of every elephant killed was his). His expenditure consisted of entertainment for all important visitors to the capital, and gifts of cloths, obtained through the ivory trade, to nobles and chiefs. The first Kyungu gave head-cloths to the indigenous rulers, who, in accepting them, accepted his overlordship, and the practice was continued every time a new chief or territorial noble succeeded to office. The nobles of Ngonde got cloths every time the Arab traders came. Chiefs bringing food to Mbande, the capital, were

[1] *Bell Report*, pp. 100–3; Aplin, 1931.
[2] Kerr-Cross, 1894; Murray, 1932, pp. 210–11.
[3] Ibid., p. 64.
[4] Mackenzie, 1925, pp. 146–8; Kerr-Cross, 1894, p. 189.
[5] Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p. 12.
[6] Wilson, S., 1939, p. 44.
[7] Cozhead, 1914, p. 44.
[8] Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p. 12.
[9] *Handbook of German East Africa*, p. 68.
[10] Gouldsbury and Sheane, 1911, p. 12.
[11] Mackenzie, 1925, pp. 146, 149, 151–2.
[12] Ibid., 3, 1938, p. 15.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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inheritance ensure that a limited number of young men are absorbed into the senior generation and live with the older men, sharing their activities and from time to time holding office as headmen or priests of that generation, and the selection in each generation of young men who are *not* the sons of village headmen, or chiefs, or headmen of the past generation, ensures that commoners without office are constantly recruited to the hierarchy of rulers. In short, power is distributed.

(c) RITUAL AND SECULAR BONDS

As in so many societies, economic and ritual links extended, traditionally, further than political links.[1] Selya was dependent upon BuKinga for iron and the Kinga came to fruitful Selya to pray for fertility. The priests who came to pray brought the hoes. The many independent chiefdoms of Selya and the Mbaka valley acknowledged the spiritual overlordship of the Lwembe by sending sacrifices to him, and it was through the network of hereditary priests like Kasitile, Mwamakunda, Mwalukuta, and Nyama of Selya, and the Kinga priests Kikungubeja, Nsyanigwa, Kyamba Kitali, and Silobwike that wider bonds were maintained. Mwaipopo (116) when he was granted a Court which gave him the secular leadership of Selya, failed to make any acknowledgement of Lwembe's traditional power, and it was Kasitile who later urged him to do so. The western chiefdoms of the Nyakyusa still buy medicines and bark-cloth from the Ndali to the west, and have done so for many generations, but no common ritual links them as it does Selya and the plain with BuKinga. The trade was of lesser importance than that to the east, for it does not seem to have included iron, though the Nyiha who share a common culture with the Lambya, the western neighbours of the Nyakyusa, are known to have been skilled smiths.[2] With the Sangu to the

[1] cf. E. Colson, 'The Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia' in *Seven Tribes of British Central Africa* (ed. Colson and Gluckman).

A comparison with the frontier in West and South Africa where economic and religious expansion compelled the establishment of Government is instructive. Cf. W. K. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. ii, part ii, pp. 162-8.

[2] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Geographical Notes on the Country between the Lakes Nyassa, Rukwa, and Tanganyika', *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vi (1890), p. 289. Elton's suggestion that some of the Nyakyusa iron came from the west is discounted by Cotterill. J. F. Elton, *The Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa* (1879), p. 371 and map, cf. J. Thompson, *To the Central African Lakes and Back*, vol. i, p. 272.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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for an appropriate medicine, and his main function is organizing the observances. 791 793

(*d*) SYMBOLISM

In the field of medicine imagination runs riot, and associations are unpredictable. The ingredients of most medicines are professional secrets and unknown to the user who takes the concoction on trust from his doctor, and inquires no further. Therefore the study of medicine is not linked to the study of social relationships in the same manner as is the study of ritual, for the symbolism of medicines is individual and free, whereas the symbolism of ritual is common and obligatory. 278 789

Nevertheless, the imagination of doctors works within the general symbolic system, and such knowledge as we have indicates that many of the associations made are similar to those used in ritual. In medicine, as in the rituals of kinship, one type of banana stands for a male, another for a female, a banana sucker represents a kinsman, a sprouting shoot conception. Smithing and coition are felt to be alike, and the molten iron that trickles out of a forge is linked with menstrual blood. Hair stands for growth, and a bald pate a devastated field. A ring, or circumambulation, implies a protecting fence. Pythons, crocodiles, leopards, and lions stand for power and majesty, spears and thorns for attack; vomiting and emptiness for innocence, spitting for forgiveness. There is colour symbolism in medicines (though we know little of it save that the *ikipiki* which stands for the blood of the lineage is red, or reddish brown), and auditory symbolism, the rumble of thunder and the groaning of a bellows being identified. Men mime that which they wish to avoid, as well as that which they desire; like things are antagonistic as well as sympathetic. No doubt a laborious study of prescriptions would reveal further general principles of association, as well as the range of individual imagination, but such a task has yet to be undertaken. [831] [326] [825] [827] [822]

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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usa. It is true that one still meets blacksmiths on the outskirts of the villages or some distance away from them (as in the case of the Ndali tribe, western to the Nyakyusa area), but they no longer smelt the iron from ore mined by themselves as in former times. The smith of to-day remelt only scrap iron from disused motor-cars and other machines into tools, hatches, and spear-heads, unless, of course, the natives prefer to buy imported iron-ware. As with the Chaga, also the Nyakyusa smith can only be persuaded to submit to being photographed after long negotiation and a change into better clothes. The blacksmiths I met in the Bundali Mountains, however, made no objections whatever to being photographed at their work. Also women were allowed to attend. But one feature of the ancient Nyakyusa blacksmith's culture has been preserved till the present day: the lower part of the bellows through which the air blast is driven into the fire is still made of wood. This feature has been defined by H. Baumann as an element of the "ancient nigritic culture".

12. Dress. The cloths of the Nyakyusa have changed to a very considerable degree since the beginning of European influence. A comparison of the earliest pictures and descriptions of inhabitants at the northern end of Lake Nyasa with the dress of modern times brings out this point most forcibly. Originally the Nyakyusa went almost naked, adorned only with rings and belts, but nowadays all degrees of compromise with European fashions of dress are to be found, especially near the European settlements and Mission Stations. The most conservative element are, in this case, the women. It is still possible to-day to observe in each village the preparation of the long strips of bark *(elyabi*, pl. *amabi)* commonly worn by the women. The so-called *impandapanda* (Fotheringham: *mlambe)* tree furnishes the dress material. After the bark has been immersed in water, the bast is beaten with wooden instruments and then pulled off from the harder parts of the bark. These tools are like hammers; the flat end of such an implement is furrowed, sometimes with a disk made of horn, and as it produces patters on the bast it is called "*obosimbe*", that which produces patters. These long belts, almost reaching the ground, especially in front, are mostly ruby coloured, but the women sitting in front of their huts manufacture also other types with geometrical (triangular) patterns in yellow and brown forming only girdles *(umpango)*. In addition to this minimum requirement in the way of dress some women around the waist also wear copper belts *(manyeta)*, made of thin copper-wire, spiraly wound on a core of hairs from the tails of cows. These